



United States Army Corps of Engineers
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News Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

WHEELER arrives for Morehead City Harbor Dredging
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~~Morehead City, North Carolina~~ Late today, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers vessel

WHEELER, one of the largest seagoing hopper dredges in the United States, will be sailing in from its homeport in New Orleans and tying up at the Port of Morehead City, preparatory to 20 days of dredging in the harbor.

While the Corps relies almost exclusively on the dredging industry to address its dredging needs, Corps-owned vessels are occasionally activated to supplement what private contractors are able to do. "Right now, the dredging industry is so busy that it was an appropriate time to call on the WHEELER," explained Col. James W. DeLony, Commander of Wilmington District. "This not only makes prudent use of taxpayer dollars, but it also serves to accomplish work that is essential to keeping national commerce flowing." Permission to use this powerful and efficient government vessel came from South Atlantic Division and from the Corps' Director of Civil Works, Brig. Gen. Robert H. Griffin.

The dredge WHEELER is more than 400 feet long, carries more than 20,000 horsepower for propulsion and dredge pump drives, and can remove up to 100,000 cubic yards of material (about 7,000 dump truck loads) in a single day's work. She is maintained and operated by the New Orleans District of the Corps.

"The WHEELER's dredging power is invaluable to us," said Wilmington District Project Manager for Dredging, Daniel Small. "The vessel not only has great capacity, it has excellent equipment and crew. She carries a 24-hour tide monitor, and a GPS-based data logger. That, and the close support of our own Wilmington District survey vessel, BEAUFORT, will ensure that dredged material removal and disposal is carefully tracked."

The WHEELER will be in the area for 20 working days, not including any time for maintenance or refueling and resupply.